

26 April 1977

NOTE TO THE DDCI

Hank -

X1 [ ] would like to attempt to get the Washington Post to publish this. Herb Hetu feels that, published anonymously, it loses some of its punch but that it will still be useful. He and I both believe that this is a command decision and should not go through the Publications Review Board. I am also giving a copy to Andrew and asking for his comments.

X1 [ ]  
A/DDCI

X1 Attachment [ ]

X1 cc: [ ]

I do not think this article is as effective as it might be if we put collective minds to it but it is heartfelt and genuine and should be allowed to go -- anonymously (but what does the author mean in saying that)

How  
(ind-p.2)  
know his solvency?

"Why I Have Stayed With the CIA"

On Sunday, April 10, an article written by John Stockwell appeared in the "Outlook" section of the Washington Post. The title was "Why I ~~A~~ Am Leaving the CIA" and the article took the form of an open letter to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

I needed only to finish reading the article before deciding that I would ask the Washington Post for the opportunity to present another, almost totally different, perception of the CIA. From what Mr. Stockwell has said about himself, I find it entirely reasonable that we should have sharply different outlooks on the same employer and on our fellow employees.

I hope that my view will not prove to be as one dimensional as I have found his. I would underscore that it is not my intention to present a line by line refutation of his allegations, but rather to invite for the interested reader a more balanced outlook on CIA, one which is rarely found these days in the press or the other media.

I would also like to stress from the outset that the initiative I have taken in preparing this response is entirely my own and that this is a wholly personal action I am taking. I have not been encouraged in any way by my superiors or my colleagues to respond to Mr. Stockwell's charges, and, as a matter of fact, I know that many of my colleagues and friends in CIA will consider it ill-advised

indeed that I should "go public" after more than 20 years under cover. What all this means is that I am myself not entirely persuaded that I am doing the right thing in taking this unusual action, but I have felt for a long time that persons like myself must somehow break our self-imposed silence if anything like the true story about CIA is ever to be heard.

The reader will note that this article, unlike Mr. Stockwell's, is unsigned. I am aware of how much effect I lose in this writing by not revealing my true identity. But I have an obligation to the oath of secrecy I have taken and a profound sense of responsibility to the many persons around the globe who, at great risk to themselves, their careers, and their families, have served the American people through me. I cannot break <sup>faith with them</sup> ^ in good conscience and I have explained why to the Washington Post, which knows my true identity.

What then are my credentials for speaking with authority about CIA? I will begin by telling you something about myself. I am 59 years old with 36 years of U.S. Government service, the last 21 of these having been spent in CIA. I am one of the "supergrades" whom Mr. Stockwell has described as "tired old men", "burned out". I will admit to some prejudice in the matter, but I am constrained to say that I find myself capable of holding my own, both mentally and physically, with many who are younger than I, and believe I am making a genuine contribution in this, my final year with CIA.

To go back a bit, I joined the Navy a few months before<sup>o</sup> Pearl Harbor, spent the war years flying carrier aircraft in the Pacific and, when the war was finished, elected to remain in the

Navy because of a lively interest in aviation. During the late 40's I became profoundly interested in the problems attending the emergence of the United States as the number one world power and received Navy training in political science and intelligence. During these years I also completed the Navy Russian language course. This effectively removed me from the rapid development of carrier aviation during those years, and I eventually elected to resign from the Navy to join CIA. I have never regretted the decision.

Together with my family, I have spent 19 of the 30 years since 1946 abroad. My assignments have been to various posts in Europe, the Far East, and briefly to the West Indies. I have a working knowledge of two languages other than Russian, which is presently rusty but retrievable. I have been chief of station at three posts and returned to the United States from one of these assignments less than a year ago.

Coming to CIA as I did from the Navy in the early 1950's, I was an "outsider" and could view what I found inside CIA with something of an external eye. I found that my new co-workers were a strange mix indeed. The nucleus of the organization and the people who were making the decisions at that time were former members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). They were very much in charge of the CIA of the 50's. Surrounding this nucleus was a number of bright and adventurous individuals with a high sense of public service. The picture would be incomplete if I did not say that we had our share of dilettantes and a smattering of those determined to remain conventional civil servants, serving CIA in

~~to~~ very much the same way they might have served the Department of Agriculture.

In the early and mid fifties, I think it is fair to describe the Plans Directorate of CIA, responsible for espionage, counter-espionage and political action, as a group of individuals much less interested in working together than they were in each doing his own thing, pretty much as he saw fit.

As CIA moved into the sixties, however, it matured into a more businesslike enterprise with an attendant loss of individuality. As the organization grew larger and more complex, it became necessary for the leadership to utilize conventional management techniques, ponder over how to become more efficient etc.

Under circumstances where proven management techniques are being applied, as they began to be in CIA in the sixties, I find it reasonable to conclude that the race will go to the swift and that the best employees -- not the worst -- will normally rise to positions of responsibility. Under such circumstances, it would be most unusual to find sloth, incompetence, and mediocrity consistently rewarded, as Mr. Stockwell has suggested.

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When you<sup>are</sup> part -- a somewhat anonymous part -- of an organization as large as CIA, it is always possible that there will be difficulties with management. I have had many difficulties with the management of CIA and I know very few senior officers who have not. I do not believe, however, that any of us has found the management of CIA to be any more infallible or malevolent than we would expect of any large business enterprise, for example IBM or General Motors.

Increasingly impersonal yes, but certainly not evil.

None of this is to suggest that CIA management does not make mistakes. Our leadership has, in my view, made some horrendous mistakes -- I have been the occasional victim of these, so I know whereof I speak. But no more or less mistakes are made, I don't believe, in CIA than in any other organization which employs thousands.

I would like to move now from my rather long-winded discussion of management to what Mr. Stockwell has had to say about the chiefs of station he has known. This is of course a subject with which I am intimately familiar. If there is a chief of station cabal, it has been well hidden from me. No one took me aside when I first became a chief of station, gave me the secret handshake, and told me how I could bilk the American taxpayer. I know that I did not become chief of station in my first station or my last one because I was a member of an elite group of untouchables who make their drunken way from one station to the next, regardless of performance.

It is perfectly true that there are economic advantages for the CIA officer, the foreign service officer of the Department of State, the USAID officer, or the USIA officer who is serving abroad. This is so primarily because a housing allowance is provided by the government for the officer and his family. The housing allowance is carefully conceived to cover about two-thirds of the rental and utility costs, and the individual pays the rest.

It is also true that the CIA station chief controls all of the funds, regardless of how they are to be used, in his station. But the accountings for these funds are audited monthly at Langley

headquarters and, seeking still more assurance that station funds are being handled in accordance with regulations, headquarters sends an auditor to each station periodically to complete an entirely separate audit of funds and accounts. All of this is to say that in CIA the controls are so effective that I don't believe I could ever have gotten by with manipulation of funds to my own advantage in any station where I have served. This is a serious charge Mr. Stockwell has leveled since, if true, it makes the station chief -- and perhaps others as well -- vulnerable to criminal sanctions.

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9. Let us look at the station chief for a moment and see how much of a "fat cat" he really is. Consider first the inconvenience-and the risk-(the murder of Richard Welch in Athens in late 1975 is a case in point) to which the chief of station subjects himself and his family. In any terrorist attack on an American embassy, the station chief, together with the ambassador, is a first priority target. Keep in mind that the chief of station lives one life at home, another with regard to the remainder of the embassy in which he works, and in most cases yet another cover in dealing with his agents. My average work week at my last post was 60-70 hours and I was available 24 hours a day by telephone or courier. When ex-CIA employee Philip Agee visited the capital city in which I worked, he exposed the entire station as CIA. The local media picked up the story with zest and featured it for several days. The address and telephone number of my residence appeared in the newspapers together with several large photographs of the residence. The telephone rang from early morning until well after midnight for a solid five days before the local

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A metal plate on the gate post of the house which carried my name and the address was sprayed for several nights handrunning with the initials "CIA". These were experiences I shared with many of my fellow station chiefs as Agee moved from one capital to the next, deliberately exposing CIA officers to ~~harassment~~ harassment and high risk.

Looking back on all of my experience as a station chief and the experiences of those I have known, I find it deplorable that those who have worked so hard--and are still hard at work today--and are so highly motivated, should be so dishonestly described.

I cannot address the matter of operational standards in Africa because I have never served there. I can, however, speak with authority about those standards which were carefully observed in the stations in which I have served and in the many stations with which I have worked in joint operations. Case officers ~~with~~ whom I have known for more than 20 years would never be permitted to handle their operations "in their own living rooms" but would use safe houses or safe apartments or other acceptably secure means. Further, case officers who have worked with me have demonstrated, not in every case, but certainly in most, the greatest care in using any means of communication as vulnerable to interception as the telephone. I can only describe the telephone conversation which appears in Mr. Stockwell's article as a total distortion of how CIA's operational business is normally conducted.

Even though I have never worked in Africa and know little of what CIA does there, my present work in CIA headquarters leads me into a broad range of issues having most particularly to do with



the CIA oversight committees of the Congress. The Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities -- better known as the Church Committee -- was one such committee. What Mr. Stockwell wrote of Lumumba's death did not ring entirely true for me, and I went to the open literature, i.e., an interim report of the Church Committee of November 20, 1975, available to anyone who wants to buy it from the U.S. Government Printing Office, and checked out the Church Committee's findings in the death of Patrice Lumumba. The following is a direct quote from page 48 of the interim report: "The CIA officers most closely connected with the plot to poison Lumumba testified uniformly that they knew of no CIA involvement in Lumumba's death. The Congo Station had advance knowledge of the central government's plan to transport Lumumba into the hands of his bitterest enemies, where he was likely to be killed. But there is no evidentiary basis for concluding that the CIA conspired in this plan or was connected to the events in Katanga that resulted in Lumumba's death." (Italics and underlining are mine.) Whether this is a deliberate distortion on Mr. Stockwell's part, or simply lack of knowledge, I cannot say. In any case, it does not speak well for Mr. Stockwell's reliability as a source. As a professional intelligence officer, I would not want him for one of my sources.

Because the average CIA officer tries to be highly selective in his recruiting and instinctively builds a high level of security into his operations, the average operational product is of much higher quality than Mr. Stockwell would have you believe. Perhaps I have been more fortunate than most, but it has never been my lot

to spin my wheels and twiddle my thumbs in competing with embassy officers to report on minor local happenings. On the contrary, as all case officers know or very quickly learn, if a CIA officer collects, through one of his agents or directly, information <sup>which is essentially</sup> of an overt nature, it is normal CIA practice to turn the report over to an embassy officer for forwarding to the Department of State.

I have never held with the fun and games routine and I know very few CIA officers who do. I see CIA as charged primarily with the responsibility to furnish the President and his policy makers with quality intelligence aimed at protecting the interests of the American people and maintaining peace in the world, and this of course is where our best operations should be aimed. Not all of the operations in CIA are at that level, but it has been my good fortune to have worked in such operations now and again and, in one case, to have been associated with an operation which I think can be fairly described as having prevented the opening shots of what could have easily become World War III. This was the operation which had Colonel Oleg Penkovsky of Soviet military intelligence as its agent and, while the agent and the circumstances were entirely unique, the operation certainly proved what CIA is capable of doing with such a case.

I have not been directly associated with Soviet operations at headquarters in recent years so I cannot comment on CIA's present level of success. I would simply add here that, even if I did have some knowledge, I would not comment because I respect the secrecy oath, which I have taken, and because even the mention of such an operation might hazard the life of an agent quietly working in

behalf of the United States in a hostile environment.

I realize that I am speaking out now in a way which I would not have believed possible several years ago; my present candidness makes me uneasy and I would like to think that my reluctance to become any more explicit and the uneasiness are not unique to me but are characteristic of the many CIA officers I have come to know and respect. I would also like to think that the American public understands that this is why it is relatively uninformed as to CIA's successes, but is rather fed a steady diet of allegations by today's so-called investigative journalists about CIA's indiscretions, criminal practices, and lack of success.

I cannot comment on CIA's operational practices in Vietnam and Angola. I have never served in either place. As an American taxpayer, I believe the United States made enormous errors of judgment and execution in both cases. What should be understood in these cases, however, is that CIA did not make the policy decisions which led to the involvement. CIA does not make policy. It is, as I have said, an organization devoted primarily to the collection of the kind of intelligence which will permit our policy makers to make good decisions.

I believe the basest charge which Mr. Stockwell has leveled at CIA to be that its officers would be willing to remove documents from files and to withhold information from elements of the U.S. Government authorized to conduct investigations of the Agency's activities and practices -- and that this would be officially condoned. I was not in the United States for the life of the Rockefeller Commission, the Church Committee or the Pike Committee.

I am now, however, directly associated with the effort on the part of CIA to respond, promptly and in total honesty, to congressional requests for information. I am also laterally concerned with the release by the Agency of Freedom of Information Act information.

I am thus very much aware of the high degree of integrity which goes into each response to a congressional query and the initiatives taken by CIA to make certain that the Congress is kept informed. I am aware that the corridors and the men's rooms of CIA resound with apocryphal stories about CIA's attempts to conceal the mistakes of the past, admittedly more than a few. But it is absolutely inconceivable to me that an officer who has served 12 years with CIA would be prepared to believe, or would countenance, the removal of official information from files in order to withhold such information from authorized investigators.

I made a promise to myself when I began to write this piece that I would do my best to maintain as much detachment as I could from the subject matter. Looking back on what I have written, I am not at all sure that I have been successful. And my frankness in the little which remains to be said will certainly not serve the interests of detachment.

It is a sordid, seedy, bitter--and inaccurate--tale Mr. Stockwell has spun. I suppose what I personally find most repugnant about Mr. Stockwell's story is that I have spent my working life in an honest attempt to do the best job I can regardless of where I have been assigned or what I have been given to do. I do not by any means believe that I am alone in CIA in wanting to do a good and an honest

job. Having held this belief as an article of faith, I believe it also to be true that my colleagues and I have served CIA, our government and our country honestly and well. To have this service so brazenly maligned--and to see my colleagues and myself depicted as little more than drunken stumblebums--this is what has led me finally to break my silence.